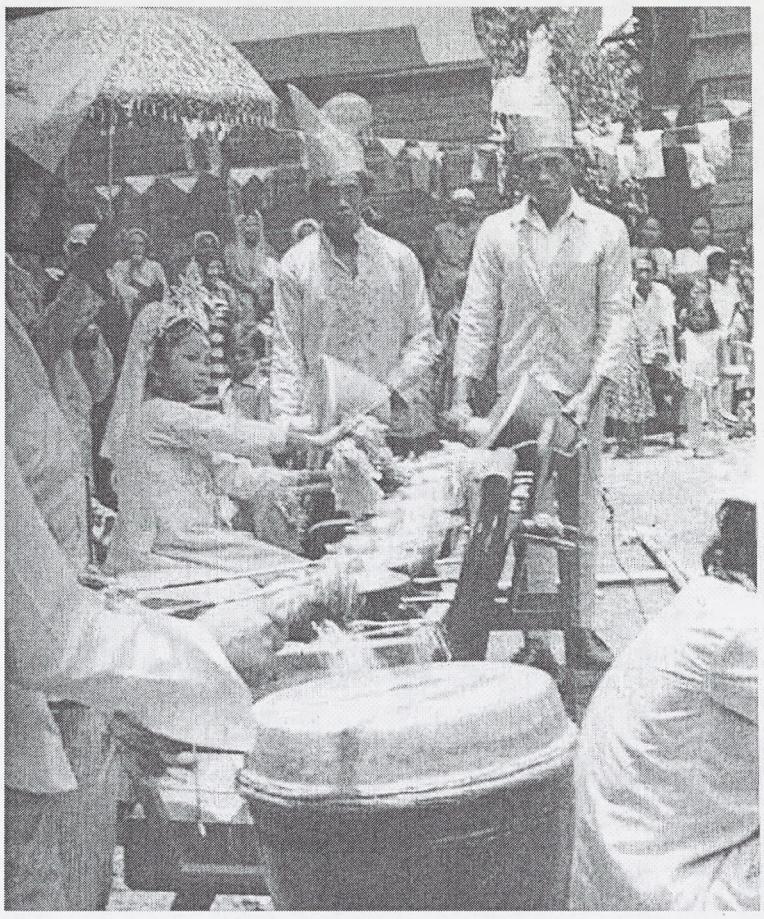
Resounding Meaning in the Gongs: Maranao Kolintang Music at UCLA



Eleanor T. Lipat

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Interviews: April 3-June 7, 2000. Excerpts from selected transcriptions.

Resounding Meaning in the Gongs: Maranao Kolintang Music at UCLA

By Eleanor T. Lipat

> Kolintang music is alive and well in its oral, unwritten traditional form. The fact that these student performers are beginners should not be construed in any way as undermining the richness of Kolintang music. Indeed, one lifetime is not enough to master what the tradition can offer. This recital is meant to pay homage and to celebrate the resiliency and vibrancy of this traditional music.
>
> ----UCLA Department of Ethnomusicology Spring 2000 Concert Program (Cadar 2000a)

The students were proud, indeed, as they watched the videotape of their kolintang[1] music recital that had taken place the previous week. They managed, against the time constraints of the 10-week academic calendar (and with the aid of professional ringers) to pull together a 30-minute concert repertoire. Even though a many of them had no previous exposure to the instruments of the kolintang ensemble, let alone percussion experience of any kind, they pulled off a successful concert that was both musically intelligible and visually exciting. For most of the students it was a sheer musical victory – they achieved a level of mastery adequate enough to perform as a unified ensemble. But for some of them the experience resonated beyond the sound of the gongs to a more personal space. They had studied, understood, and therefore "reclaimed" a new aspect of Philippine heritage to add to their cache of cultural identifiers.

This quarter I conducted ten weeks of fieldwork studying Philippine music on the UCLA campus, particularly the kolintang performance ensemble taught by Usopay Cadar. I enrolled in both his lecture and performance classes and conducted interviews with him and twelve of the students, four of whom are also professional dancers in

community cultural groups. Usopay Cadar is an ethnomusicologist and master musician from the Maranao region of Mindanao, Southern Philippines where he grew up learning Maranao musical traditions primarily from his mother and aunt (Cadar 2000c). He has been teaching kolintang music in the United States since the 1968 in both university and community settings, and also directs his own professional group, the Mindanao Kulintang Ensemble based in San Francisco (Cadar 2000a). He came to UCLA from April to June 2000 as a visiting lecturer in the history of Philippine music and as director of the student kolintang performance course.

Figure 1: Usopay Cadar. May 31,2000, Schoenberg Hall UCLA.

It was fun to witness the progress of the group, as I was also a participant observer taking lessons on the kolintang. Furthermore I, too, identify myself as a Filipina-American and sensed some of the feelings of cultural pride and personal growth throughout the quarter. In addition to the music classes I also attended two cultural performances with Usopay: one in downtown Los Angeles by *Kayamanan Ng Lahi*, a professional Philippine music and dance company, and the annual student culture show at Royce Hall produced by the Samahang Pilipino student association, also known as Philippine Culture Night (PCN). In this brief ethnography I will discuss the impact of

Usopay's music instruction upon the legacy of cultural presentations in the Los Angeles Filipino-American[2] community, and among members of the student kolintang ensemble, including myself.

I. The Search for Meaning in Philippine Music and Dance

Through fieldwork and conversations with participants, it became apparent that the three communities; the student kolintang ensemble, the Samahang Pilipino student association at UCLA, and *Kayamanan Ng Lahi* cultural troupe share some common ideological goals. Many Filipino-Americans with whom I have spoken emphasize a search for meaning in Philippine music and dance. They speak about "the meaning of the music" and "the meaning of the dance" as important understandings toward grounding one's cultural identity. Students devote huge amounts of time and energy to organize the annual PCN at their respective universities; often it becomes the central focus of the cultural organization's activities for the year.[3] However, the multiethnic makeup of the Philippine islands makes Philippine culture too elusive a concept simply to be "found." More specifically, the Maranao people are one of the Muslim minorities, more generally called Moro, in a predominately Roman Catholic country. More often than not, the Filipino-American seeking self-discovery through Moro cultures cannot claim any actual blood lineage to Maranao or other Moro peoples, nor can she draw upon firsthand experience from within those traditions. Before we discuss the experiences of Usopay and his students this quarter at UCLA, first we must comprehend the complex issues surrounding presentation of Moro cultures on college campuses in recent years.

In her 1999 article "In the Court of the Sultan: Orientalism, Nationalism, and

Modernity in Philippine and Filipino American Dance," Barbara S. Gaerlan[4] articulates the web of post-colonial forces on student culture shows with cogent insight. She identifies the Philippine Culture Night (especially as she has observed it at UCLA) as an arena for Orientalist appropriation of non-Christian indigenous cultures through highly folkloristic, stylized representations (Gaerlan 1999:252). She cites as one example a Maranao dance called *Singkil*. *Singkil* is a dance involving a female dancer and male suitor executing breathtaking maneuvers between long, clapping bamboo poles. It is accompanied by kolintang music. However, the Bayanihan dance troupe of the Philippines, known as the major Philippine folklore troupe of the government, created this stylized version of *Singkil* in the 1940's inspired by Orientalist fantasy. A slave girl tended to the dancing princess while a bare-chested, sword wielding prince chased her 'round the stage. This Bayanihan version of *Singkil* became the most popular and well-known version of the dance, and Bayanihan advisors to the California university students perpetuated this version in modern PCN productions[5] (Gaerlan 1999:254).

Aware of Gaerlan's criticisms, as well as of other essentialist tendencies of Filipino-Americans in the showcasing of indigenous cultures, select students and community organizations have been developing strategies to transmit dance and music more responsibly, with attention to history and context. For example, Louie Tortuya, who is a board member of the Samahang Pilipino student group at UCLA, states with regard to Bayanihan-style dances,

> …as long as the dance is created in the spirit of keeping in mind the people who came before you, the people who make the dance – the history of the dance….There's people that are seeing that. But when there's no kind of foundation, when it's just dance to put on a show, and then the people watching it are wondering, "why is that dance happening?" and nobody can answer for it, or

> we just put a bunch of shit together and that's being called Filipino –I think there's a danger in that. (Tortuya 2000)

Kayamanan Ng Lahi is a not-for-profit community dance troupe founded by UCLA graduates in the late 1980's. Two members of *Kayamanan* have audited Usopay's lecture and ensemble classes in order to supplement their organization's educational curriculum with more musical materials (Veluz-Abraham 2000). *Kayamanan* "strives to present and promote the full spectrum of traditional folk and folkloric Philippine dance and music forms and styles through distinct, regional repertoires that display a high degree of ideological content, technical execution and material culture appropriateness" (Kayamanan Ng Lahi 2000) based on intensive anthropological research and systematic education of its members. According to dancer and student Melissa Veluz-Abraham, senior members of *Kayamanan Ng Lahi* undergo an upper-level academic course in which they are tested on anthropological monographs of Philippine ethnic groups, and the history and function of each dance they perform. In addition the organization invites master musicians to give ten-week workshops to the performers in genres such as rondalla and kolintang (Veluz-Abraham 2000).

In fact, most of my Filipino-American interviewees have cited feelings of disenchantment with the folkloric Bayanihan style of performance and/or a general lack of knowledge about kolintang traditions as the impetus for enrolling in Usopay's class. Peter De Guzman is a student in the World Arts and Cultures Department at UCLA who has performed in a local community dance company since his freshman year in high school. He notes,

> What I noticed in terms of folk dance companies here and others that I've worked with is- they don't have a set way of teaching you. It's sort of just- you hear the music, now play it…You didn't even know if that was really how it was,

how it was supposed to be played. (De Guzman 2000)

Similarly, student Jesse Pasag complained how PCNs usually emphasize the dances, "and so the music is sort of lost in the shuffle." (Pasag 2000) The "Indigenous Ensemble" that Pasag also performed in for PCN 2000 at Royce Hall included a kolintang, two agong, snare drum and woodblocks (Lakas Ng Loob Concert Program 2000). He also learned kolintang parts for the shows from listening to tapes. He explains:

> The music was taught to me by listening to a tape…Just going by ear and playing the kolintang was how I learned…I knew it wasn't correct, but not having anybody to give me any reference or education…I don't think it was proper, but you know, it was the best of what we had back then." (Pasag 2000)

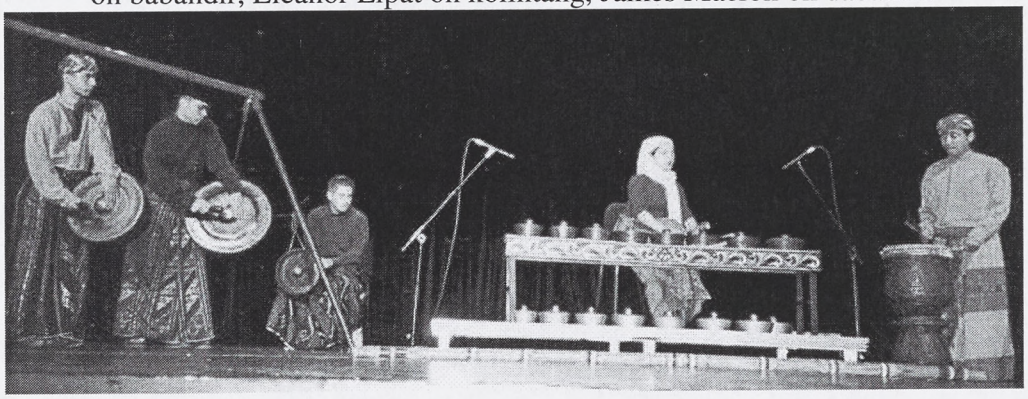
Having had extensive experience teaching Philippine music to Filipino-Americans, Usopay is familiar with that search for roots and meaning through music and dance, and is therefore incredibly sensitive to the students' ideological pursuits. His method of kolintang instruction goes hand in hand with context-ridden anecdotes and multimedia materials. In addition to teaching the music itself, he draws the ensemble members into networks of social relationships, even gender roles similar to those found in the traditional Maranao context, in order to teach both intellectually and experientially the social "meaning" of kolintang music. He hopes to inspire the students to integrate their cultural search with higher levels of academic research, so that the momentum will not fizzle after the annual PCN, when the curtains go down at the end of the night.

II. Maranao Kolintang Music and Society

Kolintang is a gong music tradition found in the southernmost islands of the Philippines. It is primarily (but not exclusively) played by the fourteen Muslim ethnic

minorities, and musical styles vary from region to region. Usopay Cadar taught us kolintang from the Maranao region in the island of Mindanao. The Maranao kolintang ensemble includes the kolintang – the main melody instrument comprised of eight knobbed gongs laid horizontally across a wooden stand, the dabakan skin-head drum, two agong – larger and lower pitched hanging gongs that provide the rhythmic foundation, and a small, high-pitched gong called the babandir, that functions as a rhythmic timekeeper.[6] The kolintang plays the main melody of the composition, while the dabakan, two agong and babandir provide interlocking rhythmic accompaniment (Cadar 1975:53).

Figure 2: UCLA Kolintang Ensemble June 1, 2000 : (left to right) Eduardo Contreras and Peter DeGuzman on low and high agong, Aron Hochhauser on babandir, Eleanor Lipat on kolintang, James Macion on dabakan.



In Maranao society kolintang performance is inextricable from social relationships among the ensemble musicians, between the musicians and the audience, and among the Maranao society at large by means of a shared code of ethics. Usopay draws upon elements of those relationships in his teaching style. First of all, he re-creates Maranao social structure in his relationships with his students. A Maranao music teacher is called a Goro. The Goro-student relationship is relatively informal and couched in an interpersonal relationship inside and outside of music lessons (Cadar 1985:34). Similarly

at UCLA, Usopay makes an effort to connect with his students beyond the classroom setting through informal conversations, as well as via email. Although there are 16 students in the ensemble he splits his attention as much as possible to give one-on-one instruction, since it is an oral tradition that requires explanation and imitation. Furthermore it is in line with traditional practice for the Goro to invite his student to public performances, whether as part of the Goro's entourage or to play an accompanying instrument. Similarly, Usopay invited myself and another student to accompany him and the members of the Mindanao Kulintang Ensemble for a kolintang workshop at UC Irvine.

Secondly, he adheres roughly to Maranao performance protocol in the way he runs the class session. Kolintang music is performed in a public setting – all those in attendance are welcome to take turns at the five instruments while the others watch (Cadar 1996b:88). Likewise, during practice Usopay welcomes students to play the instrument of his or her choice to accompany the student learning the main kolintang melody. In addition the two agong are a musical pair; two individuals will select either the low or high agong and play them in interlocking rhythms. While the low agong emphasizes the downbeat and rhythmic foundation, the high agong inserts upbeats and decorative embellishments to the overall rhythm. It is desirable that the two musicians sound like one person. Usually the two agong musicians are very familiar with each other, musically as well as personally. Therefore Usopay encourages the students to find his or her "agong buddy," with whom he feels most comfortable playing.

Figure 3: Agong Buddies Eduardo Contreras and Peter De Guzman on low and high agong. Schoenberg Hall, UCLA May 31, 2000.

Of all the social relationships within the five-person kolintang ensemble, I found gender to be one of the most fascinating sources of ensemble dynamics. Usopay writes,

> Not only is the orchestration standardized among the Maranao, but also the different instruments in the ensemble are assigned to particular sexes. The *kolintang* is traditionally played by women, and by all indications, it is essentially a woman's instrument....The *dbakan* and *agong* are men's instruments, whereas the *babndir* is played by either sex. With some exceptions, *kolintang* music played by men will exhibit those characteristic features inherent in men. Similarly, womanly elements will be felt in the music when all the instruments are played by women." (Cadar 1996b:88)

Kolintang music is gendered in terms of instrumentation and playing style. Usopay would not prohibit a student from playing any instrument, but for the most part he adheres to traditional Maranao gender roles within the ensemble. For our student recital Usopay taught all of the kolintang melodies to the female students. One woman did express a desire to learn the low agong, and another woman played the dabakan on one

piece[7]. But for the most part, when possible Usopay arranged the ensemble according to Maranao gender roles[8].

Since the woman plays the main melody instrument, she also holds a disproportionate amount of control over certain musical aspects. The general program order of a formal Maranao concert does follow a predictable framework (old style genres followed by new style, then "other" genres), but the kolintang player will size up the audience and select the specific composition. Until she begins playing her accompanying musicians may or may not know exactly which piece she has in mind.

Let us also examine the *ka-anon*, or the pre-performance process in which the musicians "tune" their instruments and prepare to play. Usopay does not use this term in the western sense of "tuning" the pitch on one's instrument. Rather, the kolintang player checks the order of the gongs to make sure that they have not been re-arranged by the player before her. Agong players test the gongs to get a feel for the pitch and tone of that particular set of instruments. Also brass and bronze are malleable materials – a gong may lose its resonance, producing a "flat" tone that would require some mild repair to bring it back to sonorous life.

In the *ka-anon*, first, the female kolintang player will walk slowly and gracefully to her instrument. Once seated, she will take her time checking the gongs by playing a formulaic tuning melody. Once she is finished she signals the dabakan player to go ahead and "tune" his drum. After that she signals the low agong player, then the high agong player to test their gongs. Finally the babandir player taps at the rim of the instrument. In the meantime, she uses this opportunity to adjust the folds of her *malong* (skirt) and ease into a comfortable and stately playing position. Once adjusted, she

signals the drummer to begin the piece, and then the agong and babandir join in one by one. She waits until she is satisfied that the accompanying parts have locked into each other, then begins with repeated notes on the primary tonic (gong 3) to re-set the ensemble to her preferred tempo. Only after the *ka-anon* does she begin the body of the first melody.

In class Usopay told cautionary tales about dabakan players who jump into the piece at too fast a tempo. He explicates, "should there be a 'mismatch' unfavorable on the part of the drummer, she may slowly cast him a meaningful glance" (Cadar 1996b:97). The drummer suffers the humiliation of a musical reprimand when the kolintang player begins at a slower pace, thus forcing him to adjust his speed. The dabakan player and agong accompanists must be vigilant at all times and behave with the proper social and musical decorum. After all, there are potential social benefits. Usopay continues, "No wonder the Maranao *kolintang* player is ideally a women, for many couples in Lanao have started their romantic past with an exciting exchange of *kolintang* and drum passages!" (Cadar 1996b:97)

III. Love and Courtship in Kolintang Music

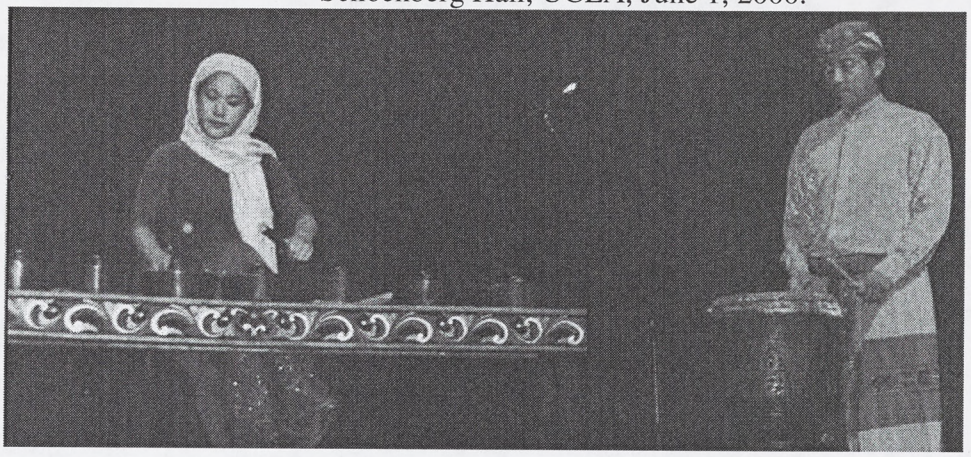
A young girl from a privileged family is trained in many artistic and literary forms. Her skill on the kolintang makes her more attractive to families seeking a bride and to the young single males in attendance. Therefore, the performance of kolintang music often doubles as a public arena for matchmaking. If more than one man has his eye on a particular female kolintang player, then the chance to maneuver courtship conditions in one's favor comes about as a musical performance opportunity.

Figure 4: A young Maranao girl playing the *kolintang* as accompaniment for dance (Cadar, 1974).

Kanditagaonan

My first introduction to love in kolintang music was through the piece *Kanditagaonan*. *Kanditagaonan* is a vocal song and instrumental piece from the traditional Maranao repertoire. Often teachers of kolintang start beginner students with *Kanditagaonan*, as it is considered a piece that employs basic techniques such as repetition and combination of simple melodic patterns. Kolintang compositions of this type consist of a cache of short melodic patterns from which the performer may draw upon. Usopay Cadar and Robert Garfias identify these patterns as the main motive, its variation, its restatement at higher positions, a second motive, transitional figures, and a cadential pattern (Cadar and Garfias 1974:98-99). The possible combination of patterns may vary depending upon the length of the song, but the determining factor of the final structure is instrumental improvisation based on the implied song melody.

Figure 5: Eleanor Lipat and James Macion perform *Kanditagaonan.*
Schoenberg Hall, UCLA, June 1, 2000.



Kanditagaonan is also a popular traditional song that can be considered either a children's game song or an adult love song, depending upon the lyrics chosen. It is a dialogic song between two young friends or two suffering lovers, one of them being Ditagaonan himself. Below are two versions of lyrics as sung by Usopay Cadar with his loose English translation:

Figure 6: Two Versions of Lyrics for *Kanditagaonan* (sung)
[Please listen to Cassette Track 1]

VERSION I- Children

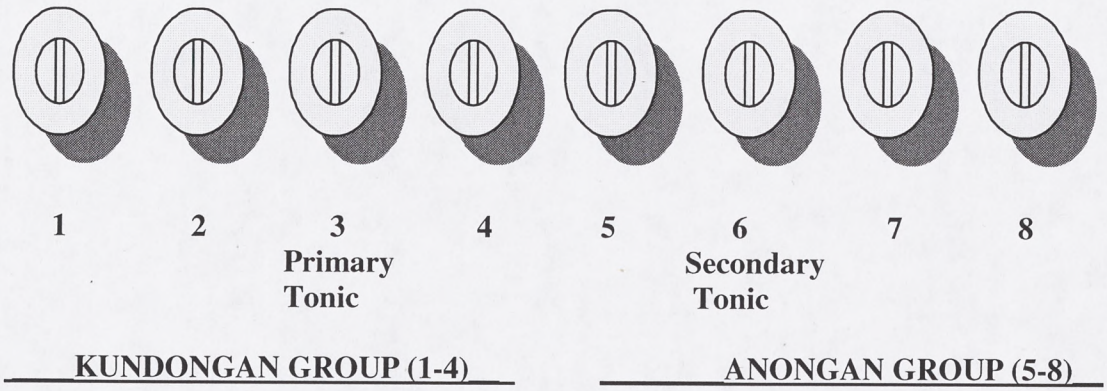
Adao Ditagaonan	My (friend) Ditagaonan
Na mamola ta sa obi	Let us sow some sweet potatoes
Na gaon'n ta bo amay	Then harvest them later
Na itinda ta mapita	And then cook them tomorrow
A k'n o madak'l a tao	To feed the masses

VERSION 2- Children/(Grown-ups)

Adao Ditagaonan	O my Ditagaonan
Na o ba ngka bo gaoni	Ah! Uproot (destroy) not
So Kiyangginawa-i ta	Our friendship (love)
Ka adi-adi so kalab	Or else being dead is better
A di so kadowa ngaram	Than living stigmatized[9]

By understanding the musical structure of the composition, I learned how a Maranao woman would improvise in her instrumental performance of this piece, based on the lyrical meaning of the song as well as the dialogic implications of its melody. I transcribed the kolintang part for the right hand, which plays the main melody. The left hand provides additional rhythmic elaborations in a repeating pattern similar to that of the babandir in the ensemble. Since the tuning of each kolintang set may vary, I decided to denote the basic patterns in cipher notation. The numbers correspond to gongs 1-8; gong 1 being the lowest in the scale and gong 8 the highest. In **Figure 7** I illustrate the 8 gongs and indicate that gong 3 functions as the primary tonal center, and gong 6 as the secondary tonal center. Furthermore gongs 1-4 are called the *Kundongan* Group and gongs 5-8 the *Anonan* Group. The tonal centers and groupings become significant when considering the melodic contour.

Figure 7: Eight gongs of the *kolintang* main melody instrument (Based on Otto 1996:126).



Musical Example 1: Kanditagaonan (Instrumental)

A) Basic Patterns

Pattern Ia (main pattern):	3434	4656	4545	543		
Pattern Ib (variation):	3444	4656	4545	543		
Pattern II a (higher restatement):	3666	6765	4545	543		
Pattern II b (higher extension):	3666	6765	4545	6765	4545	543
Pattern II c (even longer extension):	3666	6765	4545	6765 6765	4545 4545	 543
Pattern III (second motive):	3456	7656	4545	543		
Transition a:	3545	543				
Transition b:	3555	543				
Final Cadential pattern:	3456	6666	7654	543		

B) Transcription of Eleanor Lipat's performance of Kanditagaonon. May 31, 2000

[Please refer to Cassette Track 2: Kanditagaonan Played by Eleanor Lipat]

3333*

I	I	I	II a	II a	II a	III	III	Ta	Ta	Ta	
I	I	Ib	II a	II a	II b	II b	Ta	Ta	Tb		
I	I	Ib	II a	II a	II b	II c	Ta	Ta	III	III	III
I	I	Ta	Ta	II a	II a	II c	Ta	Ta	Tb	FC	

* Stabilizing strokes on the primary tonal center to synchronize the rhythm of the accompanying instruments to her preferred tempo.

Improvisation and variation are central to kolintang performance. When teaching me *Kanditagaonan*, first Usopay provided the basic patterns. Once I had memorized the patterns, he expected me to improvise by re-combining and elaborating upon these patterns. However, I had to learn how a Maranao player would conceptualize the overall piece in order to guide my improvisation in the style of a musician fluent in the Maranao language. He explained how *Kanditagaonan* is a dialogic piece, capturing conversation back and forth between two friends/lovers. The lower gongs of the Kundongan group, with gong 3 as its tonic, function as a sort of male or lower voice, while the Anongan group, with gong 6 as its tonic, mimics a higher, female voice. Cadar instructed me to imagine the natural flow of the conversation (or argument, as it may be) and structure my improvisation and elaborations according to that imaginary scenario. For example, pattern II c that explores the higher Anonan group almost sounds like the heartfelt insistence of the female lover imploring Ditagaonan to return her love. It is my hope that understanding the emotional and textual aspects of *Kanditagaonan* will lend my performance a character that a Maranao listener can identify with.

During my last lesson, Usopay noted that my style of playing the gongs had become more graceful, and therefore I was ready learn more aspects of the female art of kolintang performance, particularly flirtation. Once I reached a transitional point in the melody during which I repeat one note for an undefined length of time, he stopped me and said (with specific reference to the student accompanying me on the agong),

> this is the point…where you want to look at the audience. Cause you can stay here long. You might want to smile with your eyes, like to Eduardo…kind of steal some quick glancing, look at them. Because actually it's not true when someone says, "oh the Moro, they never smile." It's just our smiles are subtle. You do it with your eyes, and they rarely will show their teeth. But they'll smile

> with their eyes and with their faces… just little pointers that will make you, bit by bit, more Maranao.

In the same session he shared with us the reciprocal courtship message of the agong player. If he wishes, he may accent the basic rhythm of the low agong to reference linguistic vocables that the audience can interpret as a spoken message. Usopay explained, "At a certain point I'll signal…and then I'll go KATATAN KATATAN KATANDO KATATAN SO R'K ON O MANGARAGA and people will recognize that pattern." He then translated the musical phrase as "There it is! There it is! I'm doing this for the (unmarried) ladies!" Agong performance is indeed a form of courtship, and unity between the two agong players becomes all the more essential when communicating the romantic message implied by its corresponding vocables. But what happens when competition between dueling suitors supercedes rhythmic cooperation? A breakdown of the musical relationship occurs when the two agong players attempt to out-do each other. The result is an over-zealous proportion of densified rhythms.

Kasulampid

This social shift from courtship to conflict is the focus of another composition Usopay taught me. The musical origin of the piece *Kasulampid* is attributed to a myth in which two rivals for the same kolintang musician took their places at the high and low agong. Unfortunately the situation escalated from musical competition to a heated argument that had to be split up by the elders. They say that the kolintang player mocked the men by creating a melody that parodies their dueling agong (Cadar 2000b).

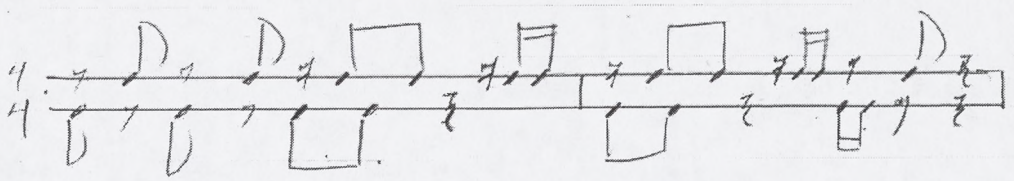
In my analysis of *Kasulampid* I will focus on one aspect of interaction among three key individuals: the kolintang player herself and the two agong players of the ensemble. In the case of *Kasulampid*, social negotiation is apparent at the musical level. Through analysis of a musical transcription I will attempt to isolate examples of musical interaction between the kolintang melody and basic rhythmic mode of the agong. Furthermore the sequence of musical patterns unfolds along a dramatic arch both reflective of the actual performance dynamic as well as the imagined narrative of the Maranao myth from which it was created.

In the formal kolintang repertoire, *Kasulampid* is not found amongst the line-up of standard song types. Rather, it falls into a catch-all category called *M'ragat*, or "odd" pieces (Cadar 2000b). This "odd" status might be attributed to its unique criss-crossing playing technique as well as the unusual social circumstances behind its creation. In a typical piece the musician plays the higher of two alternating gongs with the right hand, and the lower with the left. However, in *Kasulampid,* the player crosses her wrists during certain passages, playing rapid gong alternations with her sticks crossed. This technique creates an impressive visual effect as well. Of the three composition types identified by Usopay Cadar and Robert Garfias, *Kasulampid* is an example of an imitative composition that attempts to mimic extra-musical sounds (in this case, interpersonal conflict) (Cadar and Garfias 1996:111).

As I mentioned earlier, Usopay teaches the students to perform in a unified manner. A kolintang piece comprised of interlocking rhythms requires group cooperation; therefore musical success hinges upon an aesthetic of agreement (Cadar 2000b). As for the low and high agong parts, it is absolutely essential for the two musicians to internalize

that aesthetic, to sound like one person. It is also customary for the low and high agong players to switch places between pieces, so as to give others the opportunity to either lay the defining rhythmic foundation or to elaborate with decorative upbeats. Cadar also sees the custom of interchanging agong as a disciplinary practice that prevents any one player from "stealing the show." To a certain extent, Cadar feels that the pair of agong "teaches the code of the people, the body of the society." (Cadar 2000b) Garfias adds, "In performance both players exhibit a spirit of friendly rivalry, trying to improvise variations without destroying the basic structure of the pattern" (Garfias and Cadar 1996:109). He provides the following transcription of the basic agong pattern:

Musical Example 2: Basic Agong Pattern (Garfias and Cadar 1996:109)



Starting from the basic agong pattern in Musical Example 2, three types of rhythmic elaborations are possible:

1. To double any note
2. To syncopate straight eighth notes
3. To extend a phrase by repetition of one of its segments

In *Kasulampid,* the kolintang melody imitates all of these elaborations that ornament the basic rhythmic mode. Therefore the mythical kolintang player's non-verbal

commentary on the fighting suitors became codified as the repertory of available melodic/rhythmic phrases that a performer draws upon for improvisation. I transcribed a performance of *Kasulampid* by Usopay Cadar using a modified staff notation.[10] I provide eight lines – one line per gong. This transcription details the main kolintang melody only; additional kolintang notes that function as rhythmic embellishment to the main melody have been omitted. Also included is the verbal information provided by Usopay Cadar during the musical performance.

It is clear from Table 1 that the musical structure of *Kasulampid* emphasizes this relationship between the kolintang melody and agong rhythms. Since the interval between the higher and lower agong is usually less than a major second (Scholz 1996:34), the kolintang implies this interval between two adjacent gongs. The main musical motive stated in measure 6 mimics the first half of the basic pattern outlined in Musical Example 1, and in measure 7 the doubled pattern resembles the second half of the agong pattern. The main body of the composition is composed of variations of that basic pattern. The remaining sections of the piece are of secondary import; they begin and end the composition, and provide smooth transitions from lower to higher registers. The primary melodic focus of *Kasulampid* is upon those two-note alternations in changing rhythmic combinations. The kolintang player alternates the possible elaborations (imitating, doubling notes, and syncopating eighth note rhythms) one after the other, with the insistent character of a competitive agong player attempting to throw off his counterpart.

TABLE 1: Musical Structure of *Kasulampid (Main Kulintang Melody)**

[Please refer to Musical Example 3: Kasulampid, and Cassette Track 3]

Measure Number	Type of melodic unit	Elaboration of basic agong rhythm	Gongs emphasized (1-8)
	Spoken: "You time it with all the accompaniment..."		
1-4	Opening sequence		6 (secondary tonic)
5	Downward transition to gong 3 (tonic)		3 (primary tonic)
6	Body of composition	Main motive: kulintang part imitates basic agong pattern	3-5 explores gongs of Kundongan group
7-8	Body	Doubled notes of basic agong rhythm	2-3
9	Body	Main	3-5
10	Body	Syncopation of basic agong rhythm	2-3
11-13	Body	Syncopation	3-4
14	Body	Doubled	3-4
15	Body	Main	3-5
	"When you get bored here, you can go up..."		
16	Upward transition to gong 5		5
17	Body	Syncopation	4-5
18-20	Body	Syncopated and extended	4-5
21-22	Body	Syncopation	5-6
23	Body	Doubled	5-6
24-25	Body	Syncopation	5-6
26-27	Body	Doubled and extended	5-6
28-29	Body	Main	5-7 explores gongs of Anongan group
30	Downward transition to gong 3		3 (primary tonic)
31	Body	Main	3-5
	"...and so you went through the body, and you can go and repeat it..."		
32	Body	Main	3-5
33-35	Recapitulation of opening sequence		6 (secondary tonic)
	"...this time maybe you want to go up."		
36-38	Extends melodic sequence to highest tone		5-8 explores gongs of Anongan group
39	Downward transition to gong 3		3 (primary tonic)
40-42	Body	Main	3-5
43	Body	Syncopation	3-4
44	Body	Doubled	3-4
45	Body	Syncopation	3-4
46	Body	Main	3-5
47-48	Ending Cadence		6; ends on 1

*As performed by Usopay Cadar June 6, 2000. UCLA Kulintang class, California.

The piece begins by exploring the main motive and its variations in the lower Kundongan group. In measures 17-27 the body of the melody on gongs 4-5 and 5-6, explores the middle to higher ranges. As it unfolds from simpler to more complex patterns, rhythmic elaborations become more frequent and particularly ornate phrases are extended via additional repetition. Then Cadar reiterates the main motive, now in the Anongan register centered around the secondary tonic, gong 6. Such intensification suggests worsening conflict between the mythological musicians; in one's struggle to get in the last word one delays cadential closure of the phrase. After a relapse into the Kundongan region, Cadar transitions upwards in measures 38-39 and sounds the highest gong, before winding back down to the main motive in its original position until the final cadential pattern. Of course, other performances of *Kasulampid* will vary. But in this particular rendering the listener may perceive a dramatic arc with a beginning, middle, climax and ending. During the recording session of this excerpt, Usopay Cadar himself described the structure of kolintang melody: "it's like drama. It's like theater that it somehow reflects the relationship between the actors; in this case, between the musicians" (Cadar, 2000).

Kasulampid weaves a compelling musical narrative that has the ability to capture the listener's ears as well as imagination. Likewise it is a compelling piece for the musician, thanks to its unique criss-crossing playing style and its rhythmically rich pool of improvisational materials. Should performing artists find themselves in conflict-ridden circumstances reminiscent of *Kasulampid's* origins, the performance itself can provide grounds for social negotiation and non-verbal dialogue. But its significance extends

outwards to social relationships within Maranao society in general. That the myth found a place in Maranao lore as an exceptional situation worthy of note, and its musical manifestation as a popular virtuosic piece, affirms its relevance. By musically mocking those who disagree, the kolintang player brackets the behavior as meriting extended (and embellished) comment, thus reinforcing a shared code of ethics.

Therefore I came to understand the nuances of gender roles and courtship in kolintang performance through performance protocol, physical playing technique, and through the musical structure of *Kanditagaonan* and *Kasulampid*. During a lesson, Usopay offered,

> Because it's really celebrating womanhood, you know? The kolintang. Because like I said it's the boss. That concept that our women in our society really has a lot of power, has a lot of respect. We put them in the pedestal. Even now wives control the money, control the colors of cars in the Philippines, what you buy, they determine where they go to school, and then the music. They need not be feminists. (Cadar 2000b)

Figure 8: Daniel Giray dancing courtship dance while playing babandir. UCLA Schoenberg Hall, May 31, 2000

Figure 9: Daniel Giray courting Lizae Reyes in *pangalay* dance. UCLA Schoenberg Hall, May 31, 2000

IV. A New Aesthetic: Post-Bayanihan Authenticity

The feminist aspect of Maranao culture has not been fairly represented thus far at UCLA, which brings us back to the example of *Singkil* in student culture shows. In Maranao mythology, Gaerlan explains, *Singkil* "involves the heroic adventure of a woman saving herself from a dangerous situation" (Gaerlan 1999:263). However, the version of *Singkil* popularized by *Bayanihan* involves female slaves dancing for a male sultan and the formerly heroic princess being pursued by a sword-wielding prince (Gaerlan 1999:261). Thus Gaerlan finds it highly ironic that students generally involved in progressive politics would endorse "the Bayanihan's Orientalist message of class and gender subjugation" (Gaerlan 1999:262). As Gaerlan proposes, presentation of Moro cultures by Filipino-American students, albeit well-intentioned, has contributed to exotic stereotypes.

On the other hand, some students and community cultural workers are seeking alternative ways to supplement our understanding of the dances and music, incorporating historical and anthropological exploration. Usopay Cadar offers a model for teaching Maranao culture that integrates intellectual and experiential modes of learning. Along with lectures and anecdotes describing social contexts, he recreates, when possible, imitative relationships among the students in his ensemble. Only after studying social elements of kolintang performance and the musical structure of distinctly gender-ed pieces did I begin to understand the social status of women in Maranao society.

Mentors like Usopay play a key role in the transmission of Philippine music and its genuine sociocultural contexts. Of course, my fellow kolintang classmates approached this music from varied perspectives. Some value the music outside of its cultural context

simply because they enjoy the rhythms and melodies, and others are interested in world music percussion genres in general. Nonetheless, the individuals engaged in the search for deeper meanings are many, and their efforts are worthy of note. Often the students driven and inspired by such knowledge are in positions of leadership in their campus and community organizations, thus they are more capable of re-shaping the transmission and presentation of Philippine music cultures in Los Angeles.

In our student recital in Schoenberg Hall, we performed the Maranao *Singkil* with artists from the Mindanao Kulintang Ensemble for our show-stopping finale. Yet there was no entourage of female slaves on stage, no sword-wielding prince, and no flashy group choreography. Rather, according to the traditional Maranao model, we accompanied a solo female dancer with the appropriate dialogic melody on the kolintang. By doing so, we came closer to Usopay's vision of open-minded artists learning and performing true Moro culture to "right the wrongs" of our Bayanihan past (Gaerlan 1999:279).

Figure 10: Lizae Reyes and students rehearsing *Singkil* dance.
UCLA Schoenberg Hall, May 31, 2000.

[1] The Maranao spelling of the word is kolintang, while the neighboring Maguindanao use kulintang. I will alternate between the two spellings, depending upon the context of its usage. In the United States many Filipino-Americans have become more familiar with the Maguindanao spelling from commercial recordings and community music ensembles.

[2] Although I deal with the "Filipino-American" community in this field project, there is no homogeneous Filipino-American identity. Since my fieldwork revolves around arts education and activities in the university setting, I assume a significant level of interest in Philippine cultural traditions on behalf of my informants, since they had the desire to enroll in these courses in the first place.

[3] As an undergraduate student at Barnard College, Columbia University, I had PCN experience as the cultural coordinator of the annual student show, and eventually became president of the organization. We were part of east coast and national university networks of Filipino student groups, all of whom put considerable amounts of preparation into their annual culture shows.

[4] Barbara S. Gaerlan is an anthropologist and the Associate Director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at UCLA. She has also lived and taught in the Maranao region of Mindanao, Southern Philippines.

[5] PCN 2000 at Royce Hall did not include *Singkil* in its "Moro Suite" this year, but the dances performed did include many of the Orientalist characteristics described in further detail in Gaerlan's 1999 article.

[6] The babandir is somewhat similar in function to the lead bell in West African percussion ensembles.

[7] This was partially because the part that came up at the last minute was rhythmically complex, and required a fast learner, regardless of gender protocol.

[8] Usopay Cadar and Daniel Giray also performed on the kolintang that night, but they were filling in for two female soloists who had to withdraw from the performance due to personal circumstances. However their professional group, Mindanao Kulintang Ensemble, does feature more male kolintang performers than female.

[9] Cadar's translation is "stigmatized" but the literal translation is "two-faced." This implies that one has an honorable face and may obtain a dishonorable face; the bad often eclipses the good reputation.

[10] There are eight tones in the kolintang which follow roughly a pentatonic scale, but the precise tuning of each interval varies from set to set and village to village. This modified staff notation identifies the note played by its placement in the sequence gongs, not by its actual pitch.

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Eleanor Lipat
Fieldwork Methods
Final Class Presentation

In this presentation today, I hope to share with you some of the rich things that I learned about the Philippine kulintang this quarter, specifically the relationship of the music and musical performance to aspects of gender and courtship. I have conducted 8 weeks of fieldwork studying Philippine music on the UCLA campus, particularly the Kulintang performance ensemble taught by visiting Professor Usopay Cadar. Professor Usopay Cadar has been teaching kulintang music in the United States since the 1960's. He is an ethnomusicolgist and master musician from the Maranao region of Mindanao, Southern Philippines where he grew up learning Maranao musical traditions primarily from his mother and aunt.

I enrolled in both his Philippine music lecture and Kulintang performance class, and conducted interviews with him and eleven of the students, four of whom are also professional dancers in community groups. In addition to the music classes I also attended two cultural performances; one in downtown Los Angeles by Kayamanan Ng Lahi, a professional Philippine music and dance company, and the annual student culture show at Royce Hall produced by the Samahang Pilipino student association, otherwise known as Philippine Culture Night (PCN). I learned that these three communities; the student kulintang ensemble, Samahang Pilipino student association at UCLA, and Kayamanan Ng Lahi cultural troupe share a common ideological goal. Many whom I have spoken with emphasize a search for meaning in Philippine culture. They speak about "the meaning of the music" and "the meaning of the dance" as an important path toward grounding one's cultural identity. Through my fieldwork experience I came to realize that this elusive "meaning" is actually the sociocultural context surrounding this art form.

Having had extensive experience teaching Philippine music to Filipino-Americans, Professor Cadar is familiar with that search for roots and meaning through music and dance, and is therefore incredibly sensitive to the student's academic needs. His method of kulintang instruction goes hand in hand with contextualizing anecdotes and multimedia materials. In addition to teaching the music itself, he draws the ensemble members into networks of social relationships, even gender roles similar to those found

in the traditional Maranao context, in order to teach us both intellectually and experientially the "meaning" of Kulintang music.

Kulintang is a gong music tradition found in the southernmost islands of the Philippines. It is primarily (but not exclusively) played by the fourteen Muslim ethnic minorities, and musical styles vary from region to region. Usopay Cadar taught us kulintang from the Maranao region in the island of Mindanao. The Maranao kulintang ensemble is comprised of the kulintang-the main melody instrument comprised of eight knobbed gongs laid horizontally across a wooden stand, the dabakan skin-head drum, two agongs larger ~~and lower pitched~~ hanging gongs that provide the rhythmic foundation, and a small, high-pitched gong called the babandir, that functions as a rhythmic timekeeper (not unlike the lead bell of West African percussion ensembles). The kulintang plays the melody of the composition, while the drum, 2 agongs and babandir provide interlocking rhythmic accompaniment.

In Maranao society Kulintang performance is inextricable from social relationships among the ensemble musicians, between the musicians and the audience, and among the Maranao society at large ~~by means of a shared code of ethics~~. First of all, Professor Cadar re-creates Maranao social structure in his relationship with his students. A Maranao music teacher is called a Goro. The Goro-student relationship is relatively informal and couched in an interpersonal relationship outside of music lessons. At UCLA, Professor Cadar makes an effort to connect with his students beyond the classroom setting through informal conversations, as well as via email. Furthermore it is in line with traditional practice for the Guro to invite his student to public performances, whether as part of the Goro's entourage or to play an accompanying instrument. Last week, Professor Cadar invited myself and another student to accompany him for a kulintang workshop at UC Irvine. Although there are 16 students in the class he splits his attention as much as possible to give us one-on-one instruction, since it is an oral tradition that requires explanation and imitation.

Secondly, he adheres roughly to Maranao performance protocol in the way he runs the class session. Kulintang music is performed in a public setting- all those in attendance are welcome to take turns at the five instruments while the others watch. Likewise, Professor Cadar welcomes students to play the instrument of his or her choice to

accompany the student learning the main kulintang melody. The 2 agong are a musical pair; two people will select either the low or high agong and play them in interlocking rhythms. While the low agong emphasizes the downbeat and rhythmic foundation, the high agong inserts upbeats and decorative embellishments to the overall rhythm. It is absolutely essential for the two musicians to sound like one person. Usually the two agong musicians are very familiar with each other, musically as well as personally. Therefore Professor Cadar encourages the students to find his or her "agong buddy," with whom he feels most comfortable playing.

Thirdly,
One of the most fascinating aspects of ensemble dynamics is gender. Professor Cadar would not prohibit a student from any instrument, but for the most part he adheres to traditional gender roles of the Maranao ensemble. The kulintang is traditionally a woman's instrument. A young girl from a privileged family is trained in many artistic and literary forms. Her skill on the kulintang makes her more attractive to families seeking a bride and to the young single males in attendance. Therefore; the performance of kulintang music often doubles as a public arena for matchmaking. Traditionally, the kulintang is a woman's instrument (Please see photo, Appendix A) to be accompanied by men on the agongs, dabakan, and sometimes babandir. If more than one man has his eye on a particular female kulintang player, then the chance to maneuver courtship conditions in one's favor comes about as a musical performance opportunity.

Professor Cadar also teaches the art of Kulintang performance protocol that places the female kulintang soloist above her male accompanists. For example, let us examine the Ka-anon, or the pre-performance process in which the musicians "tune" their instruments and prepare to play. First, the female soloist will walk slowly and gracefully to her instrument. Once seated, she will take her time checking the gongs by playing a formulaic tuning melody. Once she is finished she signals the dabakan player to go ahead and "tune" his drum. After that she signals the low agong player, then the high agong player to test their gongs. Finally the babandir player taps at the rim of the instrument. In the meantime, the soloist uses this opportunity to adjust the folds of her malong (skirt) and ease into a comfortable and stately playing position. She signals the drummer to begin the piece, then the agongs and babandir join in one by one. She waits until she is satisfied that the accompanying parts have locked into each other, then

begins with repeated notes on the tonic (gong 3) to re-set the ensemble to her preferred tempo. Only then does she begin the body of the melody.

[VIDEO CLIP OF KANDITAGAONAN]

During my last lesson, Professor Cadar noted that my style of playing the gongs had become more graceful, and therefore I was ready learn more aspects of the female art of kulintang, particularly flirtation, with specific reference to the student accompanying me on the agong. Once I reached a transitional point in the melody during which I repeat one note for an undefined length of time, he stopped me and said,

> "this is the point where you want to look here, where you want to look at the audience. Cause you can stay here long. You might want to smile with your eyes, like to Eduardo... kind of steal some quick glancing, look at them. Because actually it's not true when someone says, 'oh the Moro, they never smile...' it's just our smiles are subtle. You do it with your eyes, and they rarely will show their teeth. But they'll smile with their eyes and with their faces... just little pointers that will make you, bit by bit more Maranao."

In the same session he shared with us the courtship message of the agong player. One can accent the basic rhythm of the low agong to reference linguistic vocables that the audience can interpret as a spoken message. He explained, "At a certain point I'll signal him...and then I'll go KATATAN KATATAN KATANDO KATATAN SO R'K ON O MANGARAGA and people will recognize that pattern." He then translated the phrase as "There it is! There it is! I'm doing this for the (unmarried) ladies!" Agong performance is indeed a form of courtship, and unity between the two players becomes all the more essential when communicating the romantic message implied by its corresponding vocables. But what happens when competition supercedes cooperation? A breakdown of the musical relationship occurs when the two agong players attempt to out-do each other. The result is an over-zealous proportion of densified rhythms.

This social shift from courtship to conflict is the focus of a composition Professor Cadar has been teaching me. The musical origin of the piece, *Kasulampid* is explained through a myth in which two rivals for the same kulintang musician took their places at the high

and low agongs. Unfortunately the situation escalated from musical competition to a heated argument that had to be split up by the elders. They say that the kulintang player mocked the men by creating a melody that parodies their dueling agongs.

[PLAY EXCERPT FROM KASULAMPID]

Therefore I came to understand the nuances of courtship in Kulintang performance through performance protocol, physical playing technique, and through the musical structure of a particular melody. By focusing on the connection of music and culture, of course I draw from my own personal experience in the Kulintang class.

My fellow students approached this music from varied perspectives. Some value the music outside of its cultural context because they enjoyed the rhythms and melodies, and others are interested in world music percussion genres in general. However the individuals engaged in this search for deeper meanings are many, and their efforts are worthy of note. Mentors like Professor Cadar play a key role in the transmission of Philippine music and its sociocultural contexts. The students driven and inspired by such knowledge are in positions of leadership in their campus and community organizations, thus constantly re-shaping the transmission and presentation of Philippine music cultures in Los Angeles.

Kapribogar patterns

DATE

3432 3432
3434 3432
3434 34

8 patterns of 8 eighth notes each

2-gongs 234 5-gongs 345 1-3456

33333

3432 3432 3432 3432
(x2) 3434 3432 3432 3432
~~3432 3432 3434 3432~~
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~~3434 3454 3454~~
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3454 6454
3454 6454
3454 6464
7464 5

Basics

3432
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4354
3555 4354
3545 4354

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3545 4354 3555 4354
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3455 4354 3455 4354
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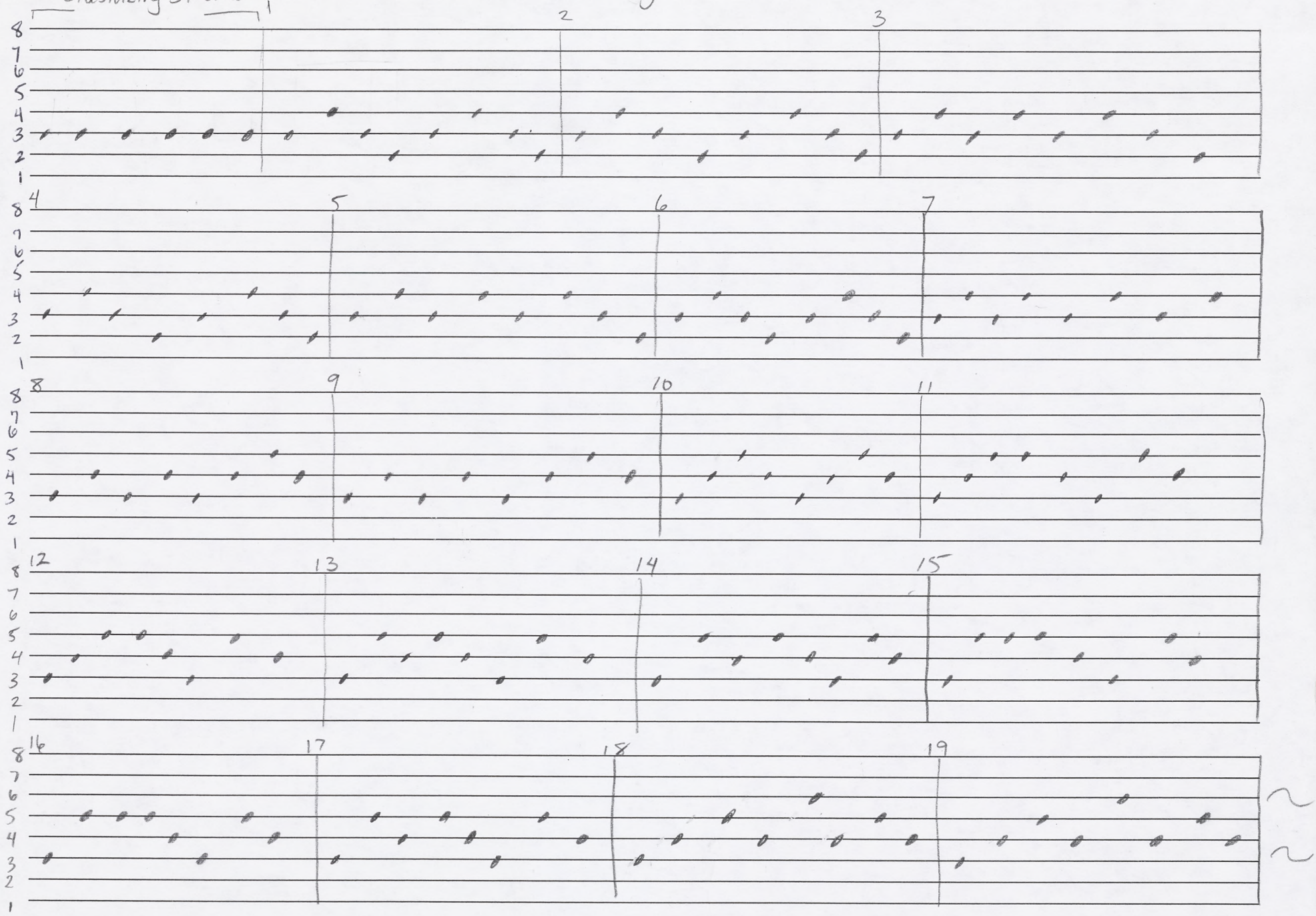
3555 4354

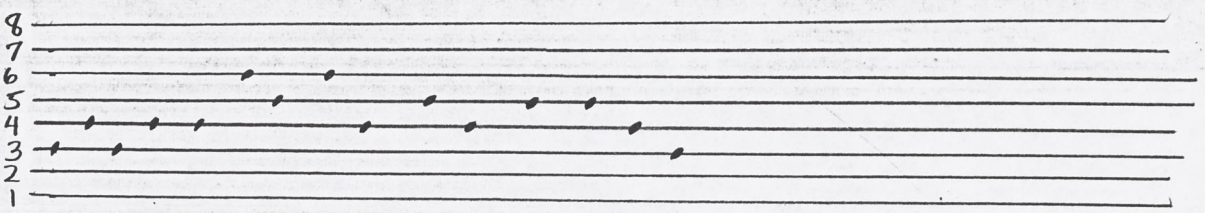
PREPARED BY

PAGE

Kapribogar

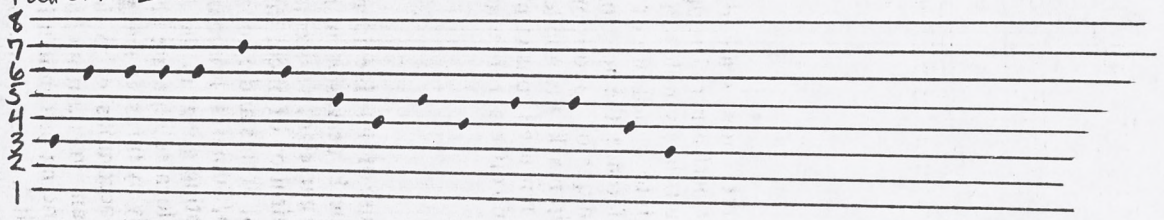
a.k.a. "The Twilight Zone"

(1st section of 3)

Pattern I

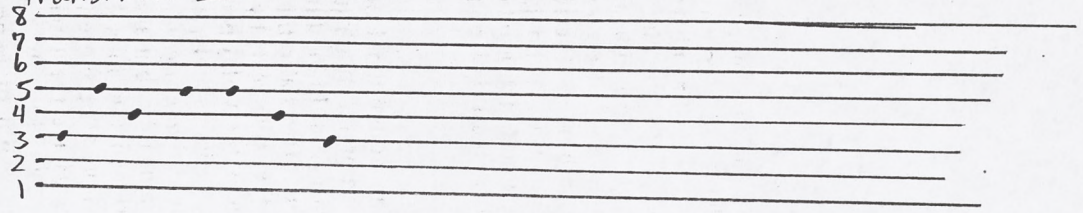


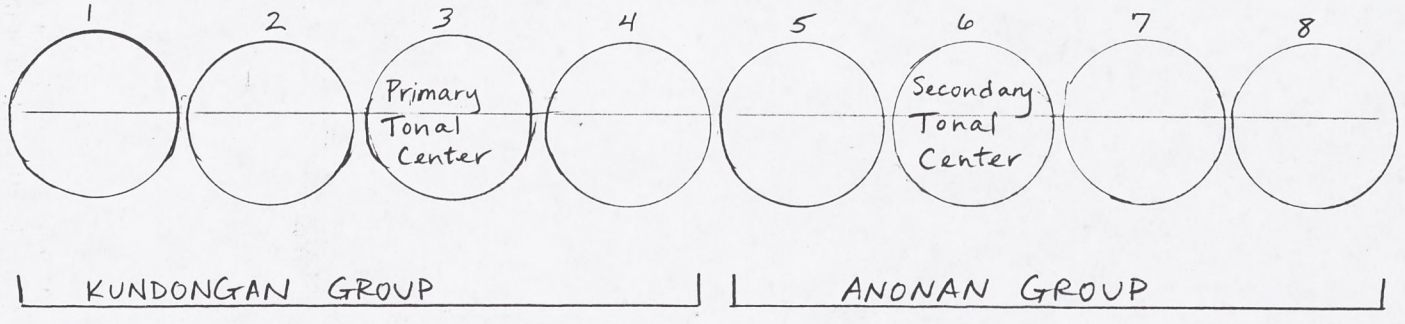
Ib (variation)

Pattern IIa



Transition Ia

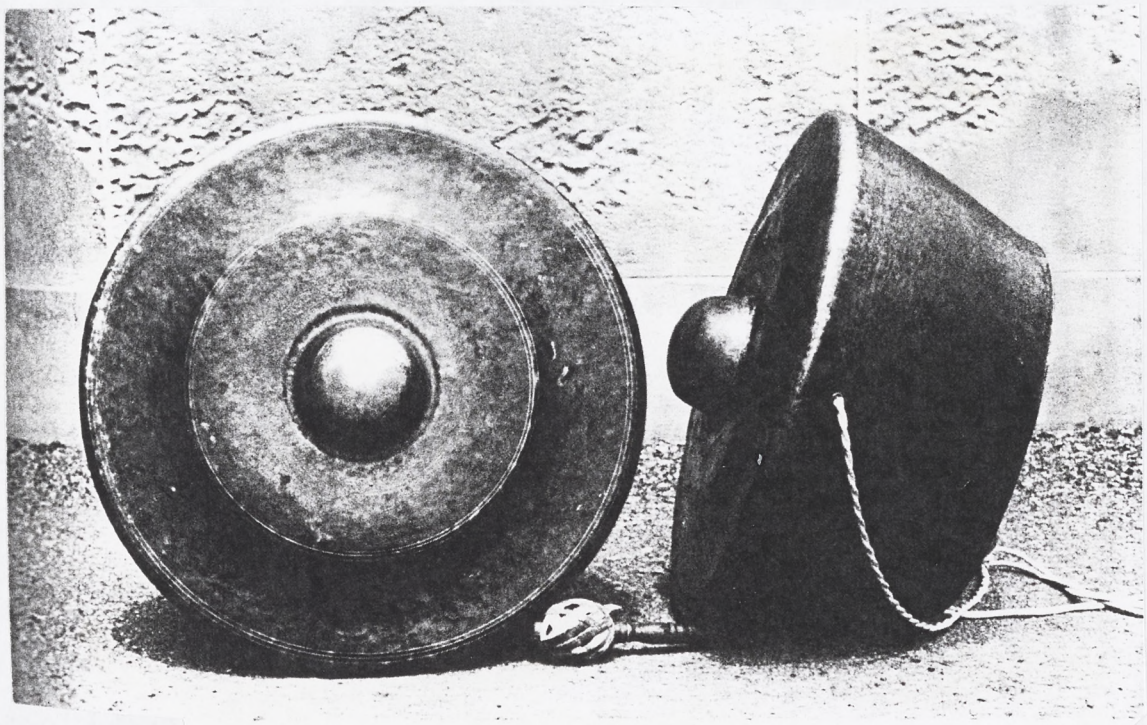




Appendix A: Maranao Kulintang and Agong Pair

A young Maranao girl playing the *kolintang* as accompaniment for dance. (Cadar, 1974.)

(Kalanduyan 1996: 11)

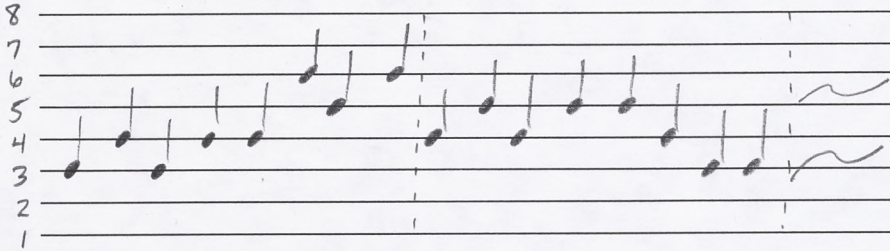


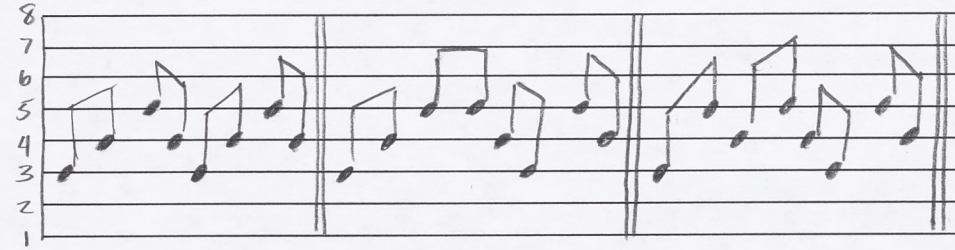
The *agong:* the *penanggisa-an* on which the basic part is played (left) and the *pumalsan* which plays the offbeat (right, side view).

(Cadar 1975: 53)

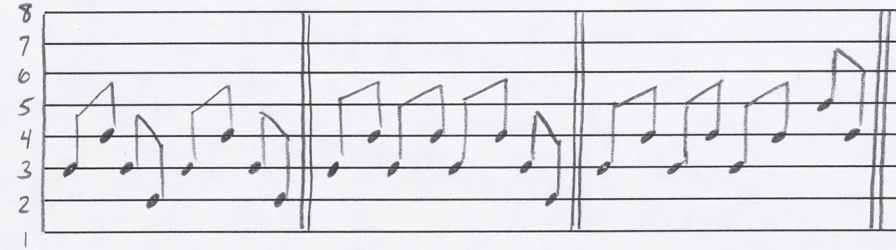
Photocopies used with permission of Usopay Cadar, June 2000

Fig. 5: Kandit Mel. Contour
ME2





Mus Ex 3
basic patterns in Kapribogan: a) gongs 2-4
b) gongs 3-5



Usopay

Eleanor Lipat **Spring 2000 Fieldwork Project**

INTERVIEWS: **April 3-June 7,2000**

Excerpts provided from interviews in **bold print**.

Jessica Angus	April 28, 2000	Kulintang class
	May 31, 2000	Kulintang concert dress rehearsal
Usopay Cadar	April 3, 2000	Meeting on first day of classes
	April 14, 2000	Kayamanan Ng Lahi concert
	April 28, 2000	Video viewing in author's home
	May 1, 2000	Discussion after class lecture
	June 7, 2000	**Kulintang class**
Peter De Guzman	**May 5, 2000**	**Kulintang class**
	May 31, 2000	Kulintang concert dress rehearsal
Aron Hochhauser	June 9, 2000	Final kulintang class
Nikki Martin	May 31, 2000	Kulintang concert dress rehearsal
James Macion	June 9, 2000	Final kulintang class
Eddie Masinas	April 28, 2000	Video viewing in author's home
	May 2, 2000	Schoenberg Courtyard
Madelyne Pagtanac	May 5, 2000	Kulintang class
Jesse Pasag	May 11, 2000	PCN student rehearsal
	June 9, 2000	**Final kulintang class**
Edward Santiago	June 9, 2000	Final kulintang class
Louie Tortuya	**June 5, 2000**	**Bruin Walk**
	June 7, 2000	Via email
Melissa Veluz-Abraham		
	April 28, 2000	Video viewing in author's home
	June 5, 2000	**Schoenberg Courtyard**
Jonathan Wandag	June 5, 2000	Bruin Walk

Usopay Cadar: **Excerpts from Tape notes** **June 7, 2000**

There's a procedure in there that's hard to describe, but it definitely have to do with the feel of what I will call stereotypical or classic or most common melody associated with that melody type. In other words, there's an average that people go through it. If you take recordings and do transcription of different players, you'll find there's an average way that the melody will flow in the beginning of the way they play it. And you know that when they repeat it, and depending on what happens on the other instruments, that there's gonna be variations. And they can take certain turns because of interactions. Cross-current interaction between the accompanying instruments. And that's really what guides what happen to the dynamics and complexity of a piece. Obviously it reflects the- you know the aim here, the ultimate aim in performing is to agree, to be harmonious. But it's like drama, it's like theater that it somehow reflects the relationship between the actors, in this case between the musicians. That if they don't like each other or the kulintang doesn't like the players they tend to be shorter. You know, she may not want to make it complex and all that. Their togetherness- somehow the total synthesis of that relationship will show its part. You will also find who is selfish and who is giving, and all that. If there's communication flowing you'll certainly feel that. That's what determines what happens in a piece, how long it is. Because when they like each other, they don't want to end it. They want to 'ok, we had fun with that idea and let's do it again.' And what about trying other ideas- they go on in there. This can be different that while you're in competition- competing and trying to trip each other playfully- you know there's playfulness in the

kulintang. You know, that's the ideal thing that happens. That playfulness can show in how the accompaniment comes out. But it certainly reflects the personality of the player and the sum total of that group unity- of how it works. So when people arrive to play, there's already teams. It's like if a group of people from another village come there and walk in they already know that, 'ok buddy when we play let's play the agong together, right? And we'll wait for Eleanor to play and become a team. They play as it is. Especially the very first part of it. And then it's like, when it becomes 3, 4, every batch have played that somebody will go there, 'now, a princess Leila of this village were requesting us to play to be accompanied by our solteros, you know, from this village.' See, there's a way that old people or people in the village are attuned to the dynamics of the villages and the young people. So there's these parents matching or- it's like cockfighting, you know matching these girls here and kind of, you know, available gentlemen in there. So they'll maneuver that- 'let's see, this man really has an eye on this girl,' or parents would wish that, you know, 'why don't you marry this girl.' They'll try to maneuver so that they could play together at some point, you know, intermix. That's why sometimes you could just go on and on. And you go there and there's a lot of pause- like one group plays and they cannot decide right away- you don't just see somebody just jumping in there. What happens is there's some kind of negotiation in there among the grown-ups, the parents and all those, you know, 'do you want, uh, Eleanor to play and to be accompanied by,' you know. Because maybe somebody may have turn if they just arrived if somebody plays the proper turn for the gongs, so that's awkward. So somebody will negotiate there and say, 'you know, he is about to be betrothed or blah blah blah. He has an interest in her- you guys don't mind if, well, he gets the drum or something like that that's not in the open but it's obvious when you are in the society that this thing goes on. This is one thing that is so unique about kulintang tradition is that openness, that it's public. It's like a dance- that ball dance that you go there and 'I'll check her out.' So you wait for the right music and you go there 'may I please dance with you?' and, you know. There could be another people there or someone will screen you out. Somehow somebody there knows the dynamics or what's happening in the society. If you don't have many friends then very few people will help you. If you have friends there's always a way that somebody could help out and screen. If you're too far from the girl somebody could jump in there in the middle of it. You would lose your turn, you know, things would go on. So it happens. It happens in this music. And I don't know- the sound of it, the actual physical music of it is as important as the romantic and social kind of underpinnings or underlying around it to a point where, if you want to see the dark side of it, is sometimes it creates fights. Some bullies or something like that will – there are situations where fist-a-cuffs will break out because somebody go-getter so aggressive will say 'no I was first here' and all that. But the thing is would jump at the instrument before the other guy could, would lose politeness or something like that. Then instead of having unity and merrymaking and all that you have trouble. But normally you don't do that cause you get beat up if you are from another village. You don't misbehave. They'll go out of their way to make you most welcome, but if you step out of the line, then you can also pay for it. Because they'll say, you insult us in our face, misbehave so certainly their men will take care of that slight- stepping outside the bar. You wait until this is done and you go home and then you get ambushed or whacked on your way home. Yeah this is (inaud) because of this Kasulampid business. Because of that, that there were fights that happened on the agong. It's like people jumping at it. But in terms of course of the dabakan, because it's a solo there, a kind of- Like, if there are betrotheds, already betrothed, right? So when she plays, really the dabakan is the man's place. But if there's a good drummer you can always say 'no I want to play the low agong or the high agong.' Or after this you will transfer there. But especially the agong in there it's potential for rivalry. And it just works well in the idea that ok after you're done you switch places because if you really abuse your partner he can return the favor. In that the low agong you have to establish that you are the one defining the rhythm, laying that foundation that the other guy's limited to work with. If you are wrong, it's likely going to wrong, right? But like I said there's a point there you can improvise, almost to the point of abuse, where you hide, you blur what the low agong is doing. And that's not good for him. It's like you're saying, 'ah, you don't know music. You don't know how to accompany so I'm gonna hide you.' Well, when you switch places he will do it to you too. But what appears is that two of you forget the ultimate goal you set out- to agree. You guys didn't agree. You were on your own and didn't- those happen, you know? Those happen quite- not unusually- it's not uncommon. When it happens it's like 'oh, here we go again.' And if you're personality is such that you don't want to get along with other people, then you're in this position and nobody want to play with you in the agong or on the part. I don't have fun playing with this guy- he has a way or trying to steal the show or not- there's a discipline in there. The element of discipline, the freedom, you have this freedom that you

can do this and that, but if you abuse it you get disciplined by interchanging. And so it's kind of- I think in the narrow sense to that extent that the instrument teaches the code of the people, the body of the society.

"As a player, there are moments there where uh, see you're becoming graceful with the way you move this. When they repeat it (on gong 6) this is the point where you want to look here, where you want to look at the audience. Cause you can stay here long. You might want to smile with your eyes, like to Eduardo or somebody. Kind of steal some quick glancing, look at them. Because actually it's not true when someone says, 'oh, the Moro, they never smile, they never – that's not true. It's the other way around. It's just our smiles our subtle. You do it with your eyes, and they rarely will show their teeth. But they'll smile with their eyes and with their faces. Sometimes you see that Indonesian thing- they smile and you feel it. Or the Japanese- we have that too. So there are pieces or passages here where the kulintang player will look and glance. (continues piece) and then when you get to the complex part, when you are very good most of them will not look at the gongs at all. Like they're just flying all over the place. They may not look you straight in the eye, but they'll be looking at the whole crowd. Just little pointers that make you, bit by bit, more Maranao."

Peter De Guzman May 5, 2000 Kulintang class

E: Did you have any musical experience before?
P: Um, growing up I played the organ. I was forced to by my mom. You know how Pilipinos are. But um, in ninth grade I joined a Philippine dance company and that was my first exposure to kulintangan music.
E: A high school company?
P: It was a professional one. But it was very Bayanihan oriented so we learned a lot of theatrical styles of playing music. The thing that really attracted me to it was it was so different and you're so used to the western style of music. And growing up your parents don't really teach you- they themselves don't know either, you know?
E: Yeah.
P: So that's pretty sad about it, but I really got into it and a lot of my friends joined it- the dancing part. But I remember the music people always seemed really cool. So I wanted to learn the kulintangan, and by the time I was a junior I played kulintangan. But what I noticed in terms of folk dance companies here and others that I've worked with is- they don't have a set way of teaching you. It's sort of just- you hear the music, now play it. And so it was just like you watched videos and tape recordings and maybe the bits and pieces of it they taught you during class for 5-10 minutes. Other than that you really just improvise which I think was true to the culture because you improvise and there's a basic melody, but it's still sort of left you hanging.
E: Left you hanging in what sense?
P: In a sense like, you weren't sure what you were doing. You didn't even know if that was really how it was, how it was supposed to be played. Until I came to this class where he basically taught you the melodies and you're supposed to improvise. So in a way that was right but it confused us. When I was talking to him, to Usopay, he was telling me that, because I played for him some of the bayanihan-influenced music that we play like singkil and he says a lot of it is not even close to traditional because it's choreographed, basically and it's already arranged. So it's not close to the traditional style of music. Like for example I played this one piece, singkil, or I played the tape of it. And it was done by an anthropologist in the Philippines, and Ramon was a big dance company doing traditional styles. And he said even that was already theatrical. He said, this is when I stopped by his music class a couple of times, that bayanihand would play that music and they showed it to the world and everything, and muslims down south, because it was popular they embraced it. Not really to the roots, but that's what they would show their tourists. And so what the anthropologist would get is a tourist one. So it was never authentic, so it just went in a circle. But he said if you really go to the villages and you perform for them and you play that music they'll throw you out cause it's a form of disrespect. They'll say oh, that's just a trick we played on you guys. We were just playing what sells. But this is the real one. And he played it for me. The one that he played for me was really cool. It just sounded more…because the tendency for folk dance companies is to really simplify it. So it was pretty cool when he played it.
E: So, why did you want to take the class?
P: Why did I want to take the class? Cause I wanted to learn the real style. I'm tired of just playing by myself and not having any guidance, really.

E: And what do you want to do with your knowledge?
P: Well, take it back to the dance company. And I was talking with Usopay and actually he's supposed to be working with me just authenticating our music, to make it sound more authentic when we play it. I mean I don't know how much a quarter's going to help me but still, it'll be pretty cool. At least I'll have some basic stuff down. And I just wanna- I recorded it last Wednesday when you guys were playing duing our class just so, I mean it's for memory just to be picture it, how real music is. Just in case he never comes back. Is he gonna come back?
E: He's really busy.
P: He told me he's a gypsy, he just goes around everywhere. So I mean, this may be the one chance I have to study the real one.
E: So what do you think is the class' importance on this campus?
P: I think it would be so valuable for him to stay because there's so many Filipinos here and there's no music classes on us. And I see them really focus on, you know, Gamelan from Indonesia. Which is nice, I mean, we should totally include that. But you have this big majority. I say there's more Filipinos than Indonesians on this campus. And yet, they don't really know their own music and there's a lot of students interested but they don't really care, or they don't feel like they have the opportunities to learn it. Except for this class. That's why a lot of people are- I know personally from PCN, are taking it. But for example in PCN, when we do our practices we don't even have the real instruments. We're using a snare drum and a random drum that somebody has and the kulintangan set we finally got this year. There's no gong we ever practice with. We substitute that with the gangsa from the north. And so the music we're playing for PCN isn't really real. And so I remember yesterday night when we were practicing, this one couple came out of Wooden- because we practice in Westwood plaze. They came out and were like, "oh!" listening to music. And they thought it was cool. But then they noticed that the instruments were western. Everything except for the kulintangan and the gangsa. Our drums and the sticks and everything- they were like, "why are they using a snare drum?" It was pretty weird. I was thinking that the one thing the Filipino club needs to do is increase their music collection. I think that would branch out from if we had an established music class. I think he's very valuable in that way too, helping us clean up our music. Because they asked me to play the kulintangan for this song, and I was like, 'ok I'll play it.' But I mean, they just asked me, and if I was a person who had no idea what to play, who very little experience, I mean what would they have done? I'm only able to help it out a little bit because of this class. So I was thinking about that. A lot of things are on this class and I think it would be really cool if we could establish a kulintangan program and could even branch it out to the northern part of the Philippines, rondalla and all that stuff. Cause there's resources

Louie Tortuya **June 5, 2000** **Bruin Walk**

E: Why is it important to learn these cultures on campus?
I don't know- with my PCN experience it was like uh- I had one teacher that was telling me, this isn't really the authentic shit. We just threw some shit in there- make it look nice. And on the other hand we had Jonathan who like comes from the BIBAK background and everything's authentic, not trying to act hard, not trying to be like – "don't smile when you're supposed to smile." It's important to learn it so you're grounded. It's cool to add stuff to dances like in Barbara's article- she talks about it. It's cool to add stuff to dances as long as you know the historical context- what the importance of those dances are. But when you're just doing it for show I think that's kind of disrespectful.
J: Really?
E: What do you mean?
L: It's just like… it's like paying your dues. You're not giving respect to the people, the experiences that went into making that dance.

[033] E: so you're saying it's in the perception of the student who's performing it… (inaud)
L: Not, not so much the student but the dance- as long as the dance is created in the spirit of keeping in mind the people who came before you, the people who made the dance- the history of the dance first of all. Cause I mean the student's gonna learn first of all through the experience of dancing, you know what I'm saying? Even if they're just dancing the dances there's something behind the dance. There's people that are seeing that. But when there's no kind of foundation, when it's just dance to put on a show, and then the people watching it are wondering why is that dance happening and nobody can answer for it, or we just put a bunch of shit together and that's being called Filipino- I think there's danger in that.

J: Yeah most people watching it probably just take it for truth.
E: What's the danger?
L: I'm going off of Barbara's article. She talked a lot about Orientalism. I think it was this guy named Said who wrote about Orientalism. It doesn't go so much into like throwing shit into a dance it talks a lot about trying to create this idea that muslims are supposed to be hard, a lot of the dances, the Bayanihan style dances, she says they don't smile in, they make you look hard, they make the guy, y'know the prince in the Singkil when there's not really supposed to be a prince in Singkil. They added a prince just so it's like this nationalistic expression that's just created because people wanna say that Islam was untouched by colonialism and the Christian. Which is true, but to tokenize that and say use that as a form of nationalism and throw in a bunch of masculine, revolutionary symbols is just like—why disrespect the dance like that? The dance was made because it was a fable that came from Islam.
L: It's more of like, Filipino Americans cause like, I've noticed a pattern. Once you get into college you start learning a little bit about your history. You become angry, you become nationalistic in your mind. You gotta separate yourself away from these nationalistic ideas and say, well why do we tend to be angry? Why do we tend to search for those things that represent struggle and resistance against colonialism. It's all a part of the history, you know what I'm saying?
E: I remember first learning about colonialism…
L: And then you get pissed, right? You question, you have this idea where it's all about BIBAK, Babayin and not everybody in the Philippines wrote in Babayin. Why tokenize all that stuff when- It's important to go through that stage. I think it's a stepping stone. Once you go beyond that whole nationalistic stuff, then you start learning that it's a complex history within the Philippines. The whole Philippine story is a complex history and you pull from it what you want. But I think it's important…

[073] L: So where were we? Oh we were talking about the phases of student consciousness. That's just like, an observation of mine- when students come in they learn a lot of stuff. Then they get all angry- I don't know it kind of- I spent some time in the Philippines for three years so I know how life- see, people are chill.
E: Being Filipino is not even an issue
L: It's not even an issue. But anyway another problem that I have with PCN is this. Can we talk about modern?
E: yeah
L: Modern. I was looking at modern. Like contemporary music Filipinos are like into hip-hop right? The whole underground
E: Cause' that's also the language of resistance and revolution
L: Exactly. And so why do we have then on PCN nights modern works like a choreographed-type… I was thinking, this is just my opinion. It would be a lot better if they-it'll be more relevant- they rolled some turn tables on the stage, had somebody scratching live and dancing and flowing rather than- because if you look at it, like, how many Filipinos do you know actually dance those choreographed dances?
E: Well the PCN has become a tradition in itself where it's now tradition to do these nice choreographed modern dances, yknow?
L: So I was questioning that aspect. For the show I had a lot of issues, like the teachers- being on Samahang board we're trying to put out a message through PCN to the constituency and Filipinos on campus- they don't even have to be Samahang members- we're trying to put out a message that there's a whole history and a whole culture that you're a part of regardless of whether you acknowledge it or not, you know? The people that came before you are part of it, your parents are a part of it, and it's not- it's a history of struggle but it's not a linear equation. We all have experiences that we don't put down in this equation of Filipino resistance or whatever. It's about being Filipino, and so being on board we try to put out that message but somewhere along the line it gets to be a big show- now we're paying $15,000 to $20,000 dollars to put on this show. We have teachers that don't even claim that they're Filipino. So I mean it's cool because…
E: Huh? Teachers that don't-
L: Teachers that say "I'm not even Filipino" but they're teaching. It's like- how does the message get passed down from the teacher- from the main committee to the teacher to the students who are dancing this dance in a cultural show that has a central message.
E: Right.
L: So there's a discrepancy there.

M: It's part of Kayamanan, from my understanding it's part of a grant we had- it's part of our educational aspect. It's called K(inaudible) Sining and we have several levels. The first level, it's open actually to anyone who's interested, so we had a lot of people from different dance troupes, coordinators, we had people from school groups, universities, like Samahang and other schools. So they'd come in and we'd share our aspect of teaching. We have specific aspects of teaching dance, specific information that we give. And also kind of categories- our way of categorizing dance. So it's like the traditionalists, the muslim dances, the western influence and the cordillera dances. So we share some background information, taught a couple of dances with some of the basic steps, our own basics. And also got into the music- musical cultures too and shared some of the instruments. You know, the differences. Sort of like a survey thing. You know, like what Usopay's doing. Kind of showing it. That was the last day- we sort of go to the musical part. That was quite awhile ago, I forget how many weeks it was. I think it was six weeks.
E: So is it annual?
M: Uh, yeah. It's annual. I think we did it once a year, sometimes even a couple times. We haven't done it in awhile.
E: Who teaches it?
M: Joel, and then we help. We TA. For example I was helping teach- I did a presentation on Tagalog. And we're given these monographs where it's our responsibility to go over and also help guide the dances. When there are demonstrations and when we're actually teaching the basic parts of various dances. So as TA's we help out like that. And then there's a second part. Now we're in a second level. We've TA'd, taken the first part. The main purpose of the second level of this treasures course is to enhance our experience with DD2K the concert. Just to give us the background information, to also increase our leadership capabilities with a deeper understanding of the dances and Philippine culture in general. It's helps us better teach.
E: so it's sort of training the teachers.
M: Yeah. Or training senior members- people who've been there for awhile. You had to have been there for awhile to be able to go to those different levels- the TA and also taking the course, the first level. Generally to increase our knowledge about Philippine dance and culture. And so it involves various levels. There songs- we had a chant test, we had a dance test, we just had a written one. That's what I've been studying for for the past couple of weeks. A written test; he gave us this much information (indicates with hands).
E: What did it entail:?
M: It had four monographs, it had all the dances from DD2K
E: Do you mean cultural monographs? Anthropological?
M: Yeah, anthropological, like for example the Yakans. It had talked about religion, some social background, social structure, general description of their arts and stuff. We didn't really go into that even though we had to and we all read it. We're like so scared because all this info- all the different monographs they were so dense and so much information we were so afraid we were going to be tested on all the little details and stuff. Really it was much more background information and we really had to focus on the second half that he gave us which focused more on the dances that we did. So we have ten pieces of information that we give out when we teach the dance: that's the name of the dance, the meaning of the name, the origin- where it came from and the name of the group that it came from, the dance cultures, so those are the categories where it came from that would be the Cordilleras, the traditionalist Mindanao, or western influence, classification: meaning what the function of it is, that would be mimetic, you know imitative of an animal or if it comes from a story like Darangen, celebratory, if it's part of a festival or feast, ritual, life cycle- part of rites of passage, oh, gosh I know I'm missing some others. But we have various categories: there's 6 of them and I know I'm missing. I should know because I just took the test! There's different categories- oh, occupational, so if it's, for example, the war dances of the Cordillera or hunting or harvesting stuff like that. So that's the classification. And then- oh, folkloric is the other one meaning it's based on traditional dance but it's for presentational purposes like some Maria Clara dances- that's the sixth one. Whoo, I got it.
E: Are you graded?
M: Yes, we're graded, because if we don't pass we don't proceed to the next level. Yeah, we are graded on it. So that's why it's very-

E: We- who's we?
M: The ones who are participating- there's like six of us. Those are the ones who have decided to go on to do this treasures course, the active participants.
So the other stuff that we do teach in dance properties is the material culture- what they wear, what kind of props we have, the movements in the background-the background in general, like who are these people, why they dance this- context wise. And the music. So those are all the things. This course, we focus a lot on this test about that. Also geographical stuff. We had to know the specific islands where these came from. It really got into a lot of detail. We were all pretty freaked out. All studying (inaud) cause it was a lot of information. So we went through that this past weekend. And then we're gonna go through the oral part. So we don't know exactly what that is. What they say is that whatever's not covered in this test they'll cover orally. It's probably gonna be more in-depth explanation questions. We'll have to go deeper into some of the concepts. It's uniquely Kayamanan, you know? In terms of the way we teach and the dances that we're teaching. And then the last part is our project.
E: You say uniquely Kayamanan. Why is that?
M: In the way that we teach. Some of it, I know has been developed by him primarily so those different aspects that I just described to you, I think it's mainly developed by him. And developing a way of teaching the basics and stuff.
E: Joel founded Kayamanan?
M: Yes, there are four founders: Joel and his wife. Joel is dance coordinator, obviously administrative coordinator. And the other two are Barbara Ele and her husband Boy _____, and they are- both Barbara and Boy have been members of Bayanihan. Boy is also leader of the rondalla group of LA- Kayamanggi. So we have, just in terms of leaders it's very diverse. They really compliment each other. It really helped us in our dancing, helped our experience in dancing. And their leadership has allowed us to _____ tremendously in the past ten years.
E: How long have you been a member?
M: Five years. My special project is to – I was historian at one time, staff member. So it has to do with- my project is to document the past five years. With pictures, or just interviewing people. A historical perspective over five years. And it's pretty neat. Tokla Sining is usually offered at least once a year. And then you can go ahead if you choose to to go on to a different level.
E: You said Samahang students attended before?
M: Yeah, actually Samahang students have participated in the first level. Joel and Ave were both from UCLA, so they started their dance experience here and I think that's how he really- his passion for Filipino dance started way back in the day when they were trying to do their first PCN and trying to figure out how to learn.
E: Do you know when that was?
M: Probably late 80's maybe?

E: Why do you think this course is important here at UCLA?
M: Just because you don't have anything like it. I think this is why Joel wanted me to take it because it's so rare that they do have anything like (inaudible) music. Especially a survey class like this. If they can continue to be offered, it helps students get a context of these PCN's- what they're dancing, what they're doing. I mean, people do singkil and they have ten million people on stage and they don't realize that no, this is what singkil's really about. A professional dancer is hired and it's a solo. It doesn't have all these fan women in the back- you need to understand what you're putting on stage is not the real thing, that you are stylizing a whole lot. To really understand what the people in its traditional setting do. It's really important that people have that kind of background (inaudible). As Guro Usopay was saying you kind of give respect to the people that you are taking that dance from. If you try to understand what the dance is about and what function it has in the regional setting.

Jesse Pasag **June 9, 2000** **Final Kulintang class**

This class is very educational. I mean you could go through four years, five years here at UCLA and perform with Filipino PCN's. You learn bits and pieces of the culture. But what's usually emphasized in PCN's are the dances. And so the music is sort of lost in the shuffle. And here's a great way to learn where the music comes from and what the music means. Because when you're performing and you're playing a certain piece of music and you have no idea what it's about or where it comes from, it just has more meaning to you just knowing where the music comes from and what it does when it pairs with the dance. So I think this is a great experience.

E: What was your exposure to kulintang before this year, previous to this class?

J: Just through PCN. Some students had kulintang sets of their own, and some of the music for the dances required kulintang music. However it was not taught properly.

E: How was it taught?

J: It was basically taught by ear. Whatever the teacher heard or thought they heard is what they would convey to the next person.

E: Thought they heard from…?

J: From tapes or from shows or… and so like, the musical aspect of that was lost. The teachers didn't know exactly what the musical aspects of the pieces were, so what they were teaching us was just, 'oh, it's this melody. And just play this over and over and over.' And that kind of, you know. Like, I knew it wasn't correct, but not having anybody to give me any reference or education, I guess, to how the music's supposed to be played and what music actually corresponds to the dance. Just the way they taught us, I guess, was the best of what they had, but was not good enough, I think. So I mean, my first experience with the kulintang was actually two years ago. That was the first time we played kulintang in PCN for, I think for the last few years. The music was taught to me by listening to a tape. Just listening to the tape and saying, ok, I think this is what the melody's supposed to sound like. Just going by ear and playing the kulintang was how I learned. I don't think it was proper, but you know, it was the best of what we had back then.

E: Do you feel differently about it now?

J: Yeah, now everything- just learning where the music comes from and the stories behind it is just- it changes, you know. The kulintang music is so vast and there's so much more to kulintang music than I ever thought there was. And I just learned so much in this class.

E: Me too.